

**SITUATION REPORT NO. 6**  
**INCIDENT NO. 2001- 005**  
**DATE: April 9, 2001      TIME: 12:00 p.m.**

**TO:** Governor John Hoeven  
State Capitol  
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring Flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No deaths or injuries have been reported.
3. DAMAGES: The flood situation in North Dakota is changing rapidly. Heavy rainfall of up to two inches, along with melting snow, accelerated river rises throughout the Red River Basin during this past weekend, particularly in the city of Wahpeton where forecasters call for record flooding by April 12-13. The April 9 Flood Potential Outlook, issued by the Grand Forks Office of the National Weather Service (NWS), indicates a wet pattern will persist across the region for much of the week. Because most of the ground is still frozen, reports from the NWS indicate most precipitation will turn into runoff, adding to overland flooding problems that are now occurring.

The Red River at Wahpeton rose to 16.88 feet today, a 1.35-foot increase during the past 24 hours and an 8.9-foot increase since Friday. Flood stage is 10 feet. The river is expected to crest near 19.4 feet Thursday or Friday. Flood of record, set in 1997, was 19.42 feet. Reports by the N.D. State Water Commission indicate that gates at Lake Traverse on the Bois de Sioux River closed when the Red River at Wahpeton rose to 12 feet.

In Fargo, the Red River measured 28.68 feet today, a 2.68-foot rise during the past 24 hours. Flood stage is 17 feet. Forecasts call for the river to rise to 34 to 36 feet at Fargo in mid-April. Major flooding occurs in the Fargo-Moorhead area at levels above 32 feet. Widespread flooding occurs in parks and recreational areas along the river, and floodwaters overtop the dike at El Zagal Golf Course.

The Red River at Grand Forks rose 4.33 feet during the past 24 hours to 39.3 feet. Flood stage is 28 feet. Major flooding in the Grand Forks area occurs when the river reaches levels above 46 feet. Current expectations by NWS officials indicate river levels in Grand Forks could reach 43 to 44 feet by April 13.

A flood warning for the Red River calls for moderate to major flooding near Drayton, where the river measured 33.47 feet today, a 2.33-foot change during the past 24 hours. Forecasts call for the river to rise to 39.3 feet by Thursday, 7.3 feet above its 32-foot flood stage.

Widespread heavy rains have caused overland flooding in portions of the Sheyenne River Basin. A river flood statement by the NWS indicates that overland flooding is expected to continue for at least another day. The Sheyenne River at Harwood rose to 890.64 feet today; flood stage is 884.0 feet. The river is expected to crest at Harwood at 891.5 feet. The river at Kindred had risen to 18.48 feet today; flood stage is 16 feet. The forecasted crest level is 18.5 feet. The level at Lisbon measured 11.18 feet; flood stage is 11 feet, and the forecasted crest level is 13.2 feet. At West Fargo, the river had risen to 21.6 feet yesterday. Flood stage is 16.5 feet and the forecasted crest level is 23.2 feet, 0.3 feet above the 1997 flood of record of 22.9 feet.

Heavy rains also caused overland flooding in the Maple River Basin. The river at Mapleton had risen to 14.23 feet today. Flood stage is nine feet. Forecasts call for the river to reach its forecasted crest level of 15.2 feet later today and remain near that level for several days.

Late Sunday, the NWS issued a flood warning for the Goose River at Hillsboro, where minor flooding is occurring. The Goose River measured 9.62 feet; a 0.42-foot rise during the past 24 hours. Flood stage is seven feet.

A flood warning was also issued for the Pembina River at Neche, where the river had risen to 18.73 feet this morning, a 1.93-foot increase during the past 24 hours. Flood stage is 18 feet. Forecasts call for the river to rise to 19 to 20 feet today. Moderate flooding occurs at 19 feet, and floodwaters begin inundating N.D. Highway 18 at Neche at 20 feet.

Recent heavy precipitation and runoff are impacting state highways, according to the Statewide Road Report issued by the N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT). N.D. Highway 13 at the Wild Rice Bridge has water over the westbound lane. Traffic has been reduced to one lane. Both the north and south rest areas on I-29 near Harwood were closed after floodwaters inundated the parking lots. Floodwaters have reduced speeds on N.D. Highway 200, one mile east of Hurdsfield, and at mile marker 258. Traffic speeds are also reduced at N.D. Highway 14, 4.5 miles south of Anamoose, where water has risen to the road shoulders.

In Richland County, officials closed roads and bridges after the Wild Rice River and Antelope Creek began overflowing their banks. Affected townships include Walcott, Colfax, Eagle, Dwight, Summit, Brandenburg, Abercrombie and Mooretown.

In Cass County, the city of Casselton is experiencing sanitary lift station problems and culvert blockage because of high water levels. West of Argusville, a blocked culvert caused three inches of water to back up into one homeowner's basement. In the city of Gardner, a homeowner reported four inches of water in a garage. Red River levels forced the closure of the North Broadway Bridge in Fargo. Throughout the county, swift flowing waters are flooding roadways.

Homeowners in Traill County report seepage in their basements, which officials attribute to spring runoff, up to 2.5 inches of recent rainfall and a high soil

moisture content. Several homeowners have requested sandbags in preparation for potential flood fights. One home in the city of Buxton was sandbagged to protect against overland flooding. A pumping operation by the Hillsboro Fire Department prevented floodwaters from entering a home. Runoff from recent heavy rain required the city of Hillsboro to place auxiliary pumps at lift stations to handle the excess flow. County officials reported that three township roads were cut to prevent flooding of three farmsteads. Infrastructure damages include road washouts and a collapsed culvert four miles west of Hillsboro. Additionally, high waters have resulted in bridge closures.

In Walsh County, both the Park and Forest Rivers are slowly rising, but remain below flood stage. Local officials are concerned, however, that recent heavy rainfall will cause quick rises in both rivers. The Red River has risen above its 28-foot flood stage in Oslo, MN, to 33.44 feet. Road crews closed a one-mile portion of County Road 2 where the Forest River enters the Red River. A Texas crossing in Golden Township was closed because of rises in the Park River.

After an April 6 aerial observation flight, Pembina County officials reported that the Red River is beginning to flow out of its banks and contains significant ice chunks. The Pembina River is flowing well and contains some ice. Muddy, wet conditions are impeding progress on the construction of an earthen dike designed to protect the city of Bathgate. Crews have only been able to complete 50 feet of the 850-foot dike. At St. Thomas, culverts have collapsed under a bridge on the Willow Coulee system.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: In Richland County, volunteers are assisting with sandbagging efforts taking place in the city of Dwight, which is approximately 12 miles west of Wahpeton, and at Beljo Estates, which is located along the Bois de Sioux River south of Wahpeton.

Cass County officials have provided briefings to the American Red Cross, Red River Amateur Club and Salvation Army Disaster Services. The county emergency manager will ask First Link to begin organizing volunteers to assist residents with individual flood fights. In the city of Harwood, members of a volunteer flood organization are making preparations for a potential flood fight.

In Traill County, individuals have assisted with the sandbagging of homes.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: During this past weekend, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) continued its efforts to assist local officials to raise emergency levees in Wahpeton to 22 feet based on a predicted Red River crest of 19.5 feet.

Workers also constructed a temporary levee on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in Wahpeton. Officials activated the Richland County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

North Dakota Emergency Management coordinated with the USACE to secure additional sandbags for Richland County.

In Fargo, the USACE established field operations and began construction assistance for emergency levees. The levees will be built to a protection level of 37 feet and designed to allow for additional height, if necessary. The St. Paul District Office has opened its EOC and deployed people to the Red River Basin.

Officials for the city of Fargo and Cass County have signed emergency declarations. Cass County officials have participated in press conferences conducted by the city of Fargo, which have been held to provide status reports of flood preparedness activities and to alert the public about inundated road sites. City officials have made sandbags available for use by citizens. Fargo officials were scheduled to activate their EOC at 7:00 a.m. on April 9. Cass County and N.D. DOT road crews broke up an ice jam near N.D. Highway 18, north of the city of Amenia, which was causing water to back up into farmland. The county Emergency Manager has been discussing the flood potential with officials for the cities of Oxbow, Briarwood, Harwood, Casselton, Mapleton and Kindred.

The N.D. Department of Health coordinated with Amenia for emergency releases from the city's lagoon.

Officials for the city of Harwood issued an emergency declaration.

In Bismarck, state agencies staffing the State EOC for limited periods this weekend included the North Dakota National Guard, N.D. DOT and North Dakota Emergency Management. A situational briefing for state functional and task coordinators has been scheduled for 3:00 p.m. April 9 at the State EOC.

Engineers for the State Water Commission have been monitoring conditions in eastern North Dakota to include the Red and Sheyenne River Basins. Staff participated in a conference call on April 6 with the NWS, USACE and the U.S. Geological Survey.

The National Guard transported its sandbag machine to the Wahpeton area to assist with flood fight efforts.

The Fargo District of the N.D. DOT provided a pump to the city of Dwight in Richland County to assist with lift station operations.

Traill County officials have issued public service announcements alerting the public about the flood potential. County road crews plan to remove a large ice jam near a bridge in Hillsboro Park.

In the city of Grand Forks, workers will raise dikes to 52 feet. City officials have requested USACE assistance in that effort. Engineers will be inspecting a hairline fracture in the Central Park dike and adding clay to the site. The EOC remained open during the past weekend.

In Walsh County, crews delivered 50 yards of sand and approximately 2,500 sandbags to rural residents along the Red River. The county Emergency Manager participated in a flood planning meeting conducted by the city of Grafton, and also reviewed sheltering and feeding issues with officials with county Social Services and the State Developmental Center in Grafton.

In Pembina County, the city of Neche hired a private contractor to haul dirt that will be used to block two entrances that are considerably lower than the city's dike system. County crews are helping with the construction of the Bathgate dike. Public Works staff members are on standby to assist with the placement of road signs and barricades. Sandbags and sand are available to residents.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No additional requests have been received.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: In addition to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Dakota Emergency Management, State Water Commission, N.D. DOT, U.S. Geological Survey and National Guard officials have been on-site in several areas.
9. OTHER: Appropriate state and local emergency operations plans have been implemented.

Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

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Douglas C. Friez, State Director